

Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat *Incorporated*

DECEMBER 1993

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting Dec 3 Water Catchments - Mr L Violini

Feb 4 ('94) Sandon Study

Meeting

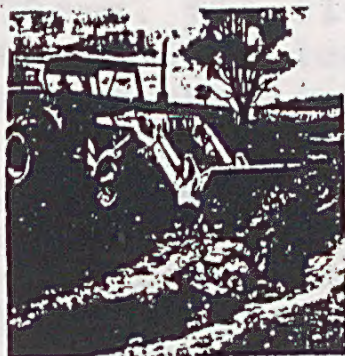
Dec 5 Mt Doran, Lal Lal - Pat Murphy

Excursion

Feb 6 ('94) Werribee/Moolap Salt Works -

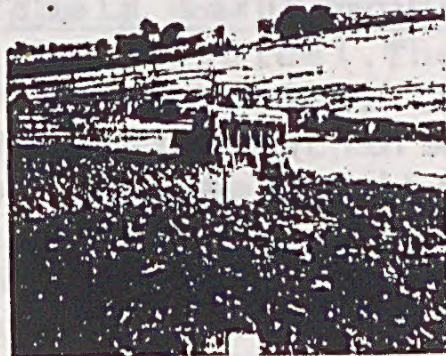
Excursion

Rohan Bugg

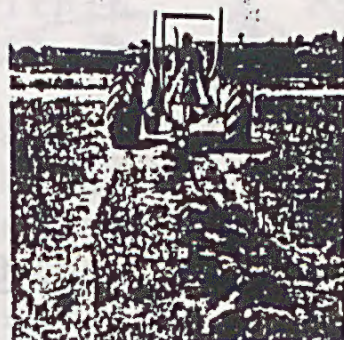


Filling in a small gully which will become unnoticeable when the paddock is chisel-seeded and sown to improved pasture.

Members of a works team erecting forms for a concrete gullyhead structure.



Chisel ploughing in the autumn is a familiar sight.



Guide lines being ripped to ensure that chisel ploughing is carried out on the contour.



Bulldozing a gully which will be sown to improved pasture.



It is important to correctly site and survey the placing of concrete structures.



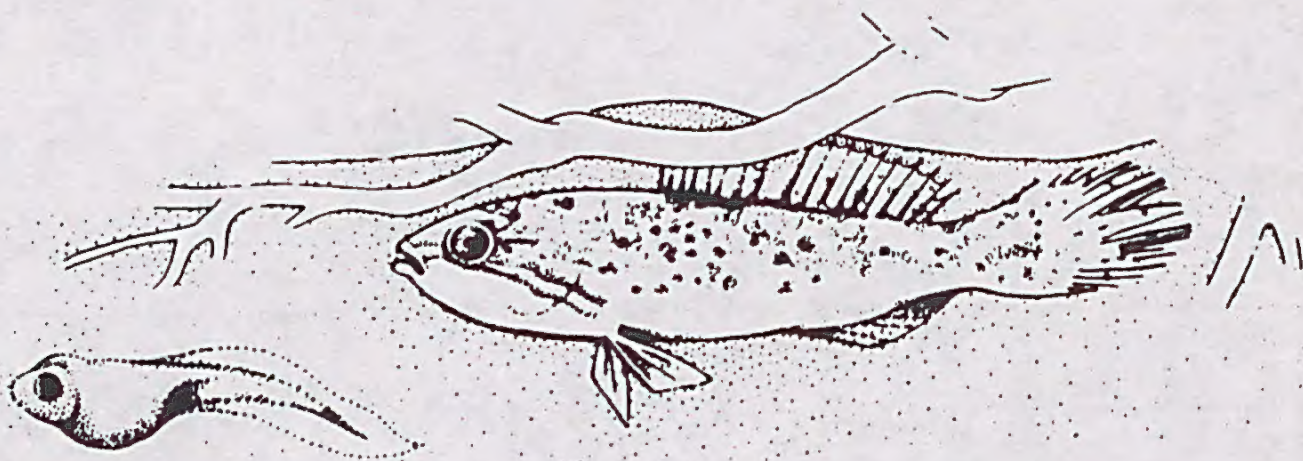
Building a grassed slope which will cope safely with runoff from the small catchment behind.

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Secretary: Mr. J. Gregurke 394993
Treasurer: Mrs. F. Williamson 327631
Editor: Mr. A. Dyson 413948

Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth, Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m. EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM BOOK CITY, cnr STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS, BALLARAT at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTING! OR at 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY.

DIARY DATES

Jan 20 1994 7.30pm Committee meeting at
L Fink's, Meredith.
March 11-14 1994 VFNCA Latrobe Valley Campout
(book by Jan 14).
October 7-16 1994 WVFNCA Field Studies Skills
Workshop at Anglesea.



Club Committee Elections

Now is the time of year to draw the attention of all members to the need to elect a committee for the year 1993/94.

All positions become vacant at the AGM and nominations are requested from members at the February meeting or very soon afterwards.

A healthy club depends on as wide a participation as possible from its membership in the administration of the club and its activities.

The duties are not arduous for most committee members. Isn't time you had a go?

K.McD.

ORCHIDS of the BALLARAT DISTRICT

No 13 of a series.

Botanical Name: Microtis unifolia

Common Name: Common Onion Orchid

Flowering time : November to January

The Common Onion Orchid is widespread and abundant in the Ballarat district, particularly in damp areas of open grassland. It is a variable plant but usually with erect flowering stems up to 24cms high and a single cylindrical onion-like leaf up to 29cms. The flowering stem develops within the hollow leaf and breaks through part way along the leaf as it matures.

The yellowish green flowers are not inverted like the Prasophyllums (Leek Orchids), are densely packed in a terminal raceme and each tiny flower has a small bract at the base of its very short pedicel. The dorsal sepal is erect, oval and hooded, the lateral sepals are slightly shorter than the dorsal sepal and the lateral petals are small and more or less covered by the dorsal sepal

The labellum is oblong with a wavy margin and 2 basal dark green calli and an unevenly shaped callus towards the apex.

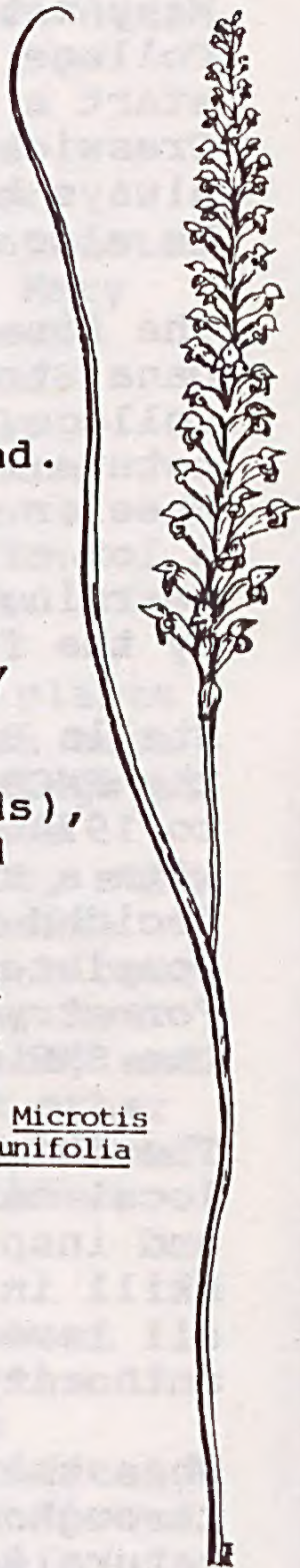
The erect column is winged with membranous and translucent auricles.

Following are just some of the many areas where this orchid may be seen in the Ballarat district :

Bushranger Bushland Reserve
Cape Clear roadside
Clunes Swamp
Creswick forest
Haddon Common

Dreamer's Hill
Garibaldi roadside
Linton bushland
Rokewood roadside
Victoria Park

Microtis
unifolia



PJM.

Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture
Ms Mary White

Mary met Alan Sonsee - a lecturer at the Teachers' College in 1952 and then heard of local plans to start a Field Naturalists Club. Alan lived in Creswick and often took people to the bush and was always keen to share his knowledge and interests. He also did some very popular television pieces.

The first meeting in 1952 was held at the old Dana Street School - then the Teachers' Training College. The club was well served by well informed nature lovers such as Alan Sonsee and Jack Wheeler. Jack had been a herd tester and had spent a lot of time in the country - observing and learning from the knowledge and information given by the farmers.

Stella Bedggood was one of the early members of the FNCB and later served as Secretary from 1958 to 1970. Stella had been a Primary School teacher with a strong interest in Nature Study. She decided to "upgrade" her qualifications and completed the first year Botany course at the Forestry School at Creswick and studied Geology at the SMB.

The Bedggood house was a great meeting place for local naturalists and Mary found she got much help and inspiration from Stella. Stella had a valued skill in being able to communicate with people at all levels and had a good rapport with those "in authority".

When the Bedggoods retired they travelled widely throughout Australia and met many like minded naturalists during their travels.

Mary also spoke of her conservation work with the Anglesea and Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Flora and Fauna (ANGAIR).

She showed many of her own photos and paintings detailing the work being done by Angair.

Although the '83 fires were devastating in the area, much has been learnt and much has been done by local conservation workers.

Early "replacement" plantings of WA natives (various hakeas and *Melaleuca armillaris* for example), have been invasive and/or inappropriate. Many hours have been spent removing them. Mary spoke of other unwanted plants that have been, and are still being, dug out, pulled, weeded, chainsawed, "Roundup painted", and generally attacked - Kikuyu, Sollya *Heterophylla*, Bridal Creeper, Boneseed, *Polygala*,... an important lesson for us all is to learn to recognize the weeds and the indigenous species in an area.

Following clearing (and burning), many new plants have appeared. In one small area of half an acre 100 indigenous species have come up. Countings of 300 Sun orchids, plus many other orchids have been made. Plants previously thought extinct, such as the Wrinkled buttons (*Leptorhynchos gatesii*) have reappeared. Some plants hardly ever do flower except after fire - for example *Xanthorrhoea*, Red *baeckea*, the Lizard orchid (*Burnettia cuneata*) and some of these may eventually "disappear" as other shrubs grow over them - indicating that occasional fire is needed to actually retain some of these species.

Mary ended her talk with some information about the Great Ocean Road committee which, with the support of major conservation organisations launched an appeal for funds to purchase privately held coastal heathland between Anglesea and Aireys Inlet. The aim of the appeal being to secure maximum protection for the heathland and associated natural areas along the road.

VLD

Excursion Sunday 7th November 1993.

A small party travelled to the Clunes area on a pleasant, fine day. The first stop was at the Clunes cemetery recording a number of plants in bloom, including a good stand of the Spur Velleia. We moved on into the Clunes Forest to the SW of the railway line. Here eucalypts were flowering with attendant honeyeaters - fuscous, white-naped, white-plumed, yellow-tufted and yellow-faced. Babbler nests were seen and two members recorded a blue-faced honeyeater. Acacia paradoxa was still in flower and frequent young plants of golden wattle were noted. The Musky Caladenia was plentiful in one area.

After lunch we moved into Fells Gully which was not particularly exciting until we reached the SE margin of the bush and walked over paddocks to the NW fringe of Middle Swamp. This area gave us an interesting afternoon from watching a brown falcon at close range to admiring Faries' Aprons (Utricularia dichotoma) in pools at the swamp margin.

K.McD.

Some of the birds recorded for the excursion - 7-11-1993

Wedge-tail Eagle	Brown Tree-creeper
Little Eagle	Dusky Woodswallow
Crested Bellbird	Black Duck
Red Wattle-bird	White-winged Chough
Brown Falcon	House Sparrows
Magpie	Tree Martins
Willie Wagtail	Striated Pardalote
Kookaburra	Grey Thrush
White-faced Heron	Red-browed Firetail
Red-rump Parrots	Blue-faced Honeyeater
Swamp Harrier	Pipit
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	White-throated Treecreeper
Galahs	Rufous Whistler
Yellow Robins	Pallid Cuckoo
White-plumed Honeyeater	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Starlings	Blue Wrens
Fuscous Honeyeater	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Eastern Rosella	Mudlark
Musk Lorikeet	White-naped Honeyeater
Jacky Winter	Noisy Miner

CLUNES FOREST - 7-11-1993.

Plants recorded include :

<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Goldfields Wattle
" <i>paradoxa</i>	Hedge Wattle
" <i>pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Chocolate Lily
<i>Brachyscome</i> sp	
* <i>Briza maxima</i>	Large Quaking Grass
* " <i>minor</i>	Lesser Quaking Grass
<i>Brunonia australis</i>	Blue Pincushion
<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids
<i>Caladenia cucullata</i>	Hooded Caladenia
" <i>gracilis</i>	Musky Caladenia
<i>Calochilus robertsonii</i>	Purplish Beard Orchid
<i>Cassinia arcuata</i>	Drooping Cassinia
<i>Daviesia leptophylla</i>	Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea
<i>Dianella revoluta</i>	Black-anther Flax-lily
<i>Dillwynia sericea</i>	Showy Parrot-pea
<i>Drosera peltata</i> var.	
<i>auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew
" <i>whittakeri</i>	Scented Sundew
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon</i>	Yellow Gum
" <i>polyanthemus</i>	
subs. <i>vestita</i>	Red Box
" <i>tricarpa</i>	Red Ironbark
<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>	Cherry Ballart
<i>Glossodia major</i>	Waxlip Orchid
<i>Helichrysum viscosum</i>	Sticky Everlasting
<i>Hydrocotyle laxiflora</i>	Stinking Pennywort
<i>Leptorrhynchus squamatus</i>	Scaly Buttons
* <i>Lycium ferrocissimum</i>	Boxthorn
<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>	Grey Everlasting
<i>Pimelea humilis</i>	Common Rice Flower
" <i>linifolia</i>	Tall Rice Flower
<i>Thelymitra antennifera</i>	Rabbit-ears
<i>Senecio quadridentatus</i>	Cotton Fireweed
<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i>	Grass Trigger Plant
<i>Stuartina muelleri</i>	Spoon Cudweed
<i>Utricularia dichotoma</i>	Fairy Aprons
<i>Velleia paradoxa</i>	Spur Velleia
<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	Early Nancy



Visit to the National Herbarium, Melbourne

17 Nov 93

Dr.D. Foreman described the functions and organization of the Herbarium to us illustrating his talk with specimens from the collection. These examples included a type specimen i.e. one on which the particular species is erected, and an historical specimen that had been collected by Banks & Solander at the Endeavour River in 1770. The latter specimen underlined for us the importance of herbaria as keepers of part of the very tangible history of this nation as well as their role in plant sciences.

. It was pointed out that most of the specimens collected and preserved on the early explorations reside abroad where the descriptive work was done. This creates difficulties where references to type specimens are required. However acquisition of the historical material is being achieved albeit very slowly.

We were shown the store of specimens and the curatorial work in hand was explained. The computerized data base which can be accessed through several headings, was also demonstrated.

K.McD.

